



# **BUILD INDIANA COUNCIL**

## **Infrastructure Media Summary**

**January 22, 2015**

### **Route For Final Section Of I-69 Could Be Changed**

Indiana Public Media  
Gretchen Frazee  
1/20/2015

Indiana Department of Transportation officials say they are keeping their options open when it comes to deciding the route for the final leg of Interstate 69. When the initial route for I-69 was identified 10 years ago, the interstate's last leg traveled from just south of Martinsville to Indianapolis via State Road 37. INDOT spokesman Will Wingfield says since then, development and legal concerns have changed. "So we're going to take a fairly broad view of this corridor between Martinsville and Indianapolis and find the best way to connect I-69 to the rest of the interstate network here in Indiana and do it in a way that minimizes impacts to homes, businesses, to the natural environment and do it in a cost effect way," he says. INDOT is launching a study to determine the environmental impact for the last section of I-69. The entire review process will likely take two to three years. Martinsville Mayor Phil Deckard says the news came as a shock. "We've made so many improvements for our city, working with what we thought was a direction by INDOT, on infrastructure, getting ready to prepare for secondary roads, for access points, land usage and that type of thing," he says.

[Route For Final Section Of I-69 Could Be Changed | News - Indiana Public Media](#)

### **Transit advocates push to increase state funding**

Indianapolis Business Journal  
Kathleen McLaughlin  
1/20/2015

A Republican from West Lafayette wants to see a full debate on Indiana's funding of public transit—an amount advocates complain isn't keeping up with costs. Rep. Randy Truitt filed a bill that would provide about \$20 million more a year than Gov. Mike Pence offered in his state budget proposal for fiscal years 2016 and 2017. A member of the House Ways and Means Committee, Truitt could work to amend the budget bill, House Bill 1001, but he said he filed a separate bill on the Public Mass Transportation Fund so it would get a full committee hearing. "I want to push the dialogue, push the debate, get it out in the open," Truitt said. Truitt's bill, House Bill 1215, would put \$60 million into the PMTF in each of the next two fiscal years. That's about 45 percent more than the \$41.3 million in the governor's proposal, which is reflected in the House budget bill. The money is divided among 65 bus systems and Indiana's one commuter-rail line, the South Shore Line, which runs from South Bend to Chicago. The PMTF has been funded at about the same level since 2008, Truitt said. Since then, he's heard requests from hospitals, hotels and other businesses for expanded routes and more frequent service.

<http://www.ibj.com/articles/51396-transit-advocates-push-to-increase-state-funding>

## **INDOT: Overpass to offset train increase in Columbus would cost \$35M**

WISH-TV

Bennett Haerberle

1/20/2015

INDIANAPOLIS (WISH) — Building an overpass in Columbus that would offset traffic backups caused by an increased number of trains would cost more than \$35 million to construct, according to INDOT officials. Mayor Kristen Brown proposed the overpass in response to a planned \$100 million rail upgrade of the Louisville-Indiana Railroad that runs between Indianapolis and Louisville. The lion's share of the improvements to the 106-mile stretch of track would be shouldered by CSX, which would share the line with the Louisville-Indiana Railroad. While the rail upgrade means trains could travel faster and carry heavier loads on the L&I line, it also means thousands of Hoosiers would have to deal with more trains every day. In Columbus, that could mean up to 17 trains per day. The plan still has to be approved by federal officials with the Surface Transportation Board. Fearing that the increased train traffic could create more gridlock and threaten ambulance response times, Brown met with INDOT officials last week to discuss building a proposed overpass on State Road 46. During the meeting, INDOT officials told Brown building an overpass over the rail line would cost more than \$35 million. That figure does not include engineering or land acquisition costs, and no funding has been identified to build the overpass, according to statement released by the city.

<http://wishtv.com/2015/01/20/indot-overpass-to-offset-train-increase-in-columbus-would-cost-35m/>

## **Larry Riley: Transportation planning takes new route**

The Star Pre4ss

1/20/2015

For half a century, the federal government has required any urban area in the United States with a population of 50,000 or more to establish a Metropolitan Planning Organization for coordinating transportation capital projects. These types of infrastructure projects — think bridge replacement, or adding lanes to highways (e.g., when we made McGalliard from Morrison Road out to I-69 four lanes), or converting an abandoned railroad to a recreational trail) — are so costly only the feds, using borrowed money of course, can afford to pay for them. Or pay mostly for them: the projects are usually 80 percent federally funded, so some local funding has to pick up the rest. Creating and operating an MPO is so the projects are long-term, theoretically well thought-out, and coordinated by priorities local officials jointly come up with since the amount of federal money is limited. Our MPO is the Delaware-Muncie Metropolitan Plan Commission, which we've also had for years, and the MPO has two committees through which all planning is conducted, including the formation of ongoing three-year Transportation Improvement Programs and annual reports to accompany them. <http://www.thestarpress.com/story/opinion/columnists/2015/01/20/larry-riley-transportation-planning-takes-new-route/22051711/>

## **U.S. bridge repair debate: Is a gas tax the answer?**

Evansville Courier & Press

Eric Pfahler

1/20/2015

How should the nation pay for needed repairs to bridges and roadways? While recent political discussions have been dominated by national security, employee earnings and law enforcement tactics, the National Highway Trust has dwindled with no permanent solution. The Congressional Budget Office said the trust is spending \$50 million per year and will have a \$167 billion shortfall from 2015-2024 if the money going into the fund remains the same. One potential fix, some say, is to raise the federal gas tax from 18.4 cents per gallon. With the national gas price currently

hovering around \$2 per gallon — more than \$1.20 less per gallon than a year ago — the federal government has a unique chance to replenish the trust fund without piling on consumers, some say. Several politicians throughout the year have pushed for different variations of what would be the first gas tax increase since 1993, when the tax went from 14.1 cents per gallon to 18.4 cents per gallon. With the national gas price currently hovering around \$2 per gallon — more than \$1.20 less per gallon than a year ago — the federal government has a unique chance to replenish the trust fund without piling on consumers, some say. Several politicians throughout the year have pushed for different variations of what would be the first gas tax increase since 1993, when the tax went from 14.1 cents per gallon to 18.4 cents per gallon.

[Bridge repair debate: Is a gas tax the answer? - Courier Press](#)

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